

Ruthlessness in Warfare By Allies is Deplored by British Religious Leaders

LONDON (By William H. Tracy) — Catholic and Protestant leaders have issued an appeal here "to all Christians" against "ever-increasing ruthlessness" of the war. Referring particularly to Allied air-bombing bombing, the statement declared that "a gesture of compassion and mercy" might help to break down the feeling among Germans that they must fight to the last, and thus spare the lives of many thousands of soldiers and civilians on both sides.

**Bloc To Fight ODT Ban
On Church Conventions**

WASHINGTON, D. C. (CRNS) — A strong Congressional bloc is forming here to get the Office of Defense Transportation to do away with the ban on church conventions and related spiritual gatherings which may draw more than 300 persons.

Several Congressmen already have referred to the ban on religious meetings in speeches in the House of Representatives, and others have said privately that they will stand behind any move to help get the ban on religious conventions lifted.

Representative Robert F. Rich (R-Pa.) opened up against the ban on religious meetings in a one-minute speech, asserting that it is necessary for church organizations to function by meetings of their ministers, priests, laymen, or any of the designated people of authority if they maintain their church organizations as they should be operated.

"I care not whether it be a convention of Catholics, or Jews, or Protestants, religion has been one of the predominant things for which this country has been noted since its formation. When the time comes that we prohibit these religious organizations from meeting, it is a pretty bad thing for the country. That is what Hitler did."

St. Polycarp

Bishop and Martyr, was Bishop of Smyrna, and a disciple of St. John. When the persecution broke out, St. Polycarp was seized and directed to deny the Faith. When he refused, he was ordered to be burned but the fire did not burn him. He was stabbed to the heart and his body burned.

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Vermont Bishop Pleads For Homefront Unity Awaiting GIs Return

WASHINGTON (CRNS) — An urgent exhortation for unity among Catholics and non-Catholics, so that America's warriors upon their return from the battlefields throughout the world may find the kind of nation "for which they yearn and for which they are fighting," was made by the Most Rev. Edward F. Ryan following his installation here as fifth Bishop of the Burlington Diocese on last Friday.

"I should like to address a few words to the good Christian people of this State who are not Catholics," Bishop Ryan said in his place for unity. "We are all brothers in Christ, redeemed by His Precious Blood. So let us live as brothers, with mutual respect, one for the other; with mutual confidence and helpfulness one toward the other, and with the one purpose of glorifying God and living as worthy children of our beloved America.

"Love of God, love of our fellowmen and love of country are the sacred bonds that bind us, Catholics and non-Catholics together. Hence let us plan together and work together for the victorious ending of the terrible war being waged throughout the world, for a just and lasting peace based on the teachings of Christ and for a better world in which to live after the war."

Yanks Hear Sistine Choir at NCCS Club

ROCHESTER (CRNS) — Members of the Sistine Choir sang for American GIs on Sunday night at the weekly concert held in the American Catholic Club for Armed Forces, conducted by the National Catholic Community Service, almost in the shadow of St. Peter's Basilica. Allied servicemen stationed in Rome and those visiting the Eternal City on leave are invited to attend these weekly gatherings.

What I have accomplished is an infinitesimal part of what remains to be done.—St. Ignatius

Don't Mistreat Innocent Warns Belgian Cardinal

LONDON (By William H. Tracy) — Belgian authorities were called upon to end "without delay" maltreatment of innocent citizens, in a sharply-worded Lenten pastoral letter issued by Joseph Ernest Cardinal Van Rossum, Primate of Belgium.

"It must not be said," he declared, "that German methods, tolerated during the occupation, continue to prevail under the Belgian regime."

The Cardinal warned that "if the strong bonds of brotherhood and understanding does not soon come to lighten the atmosphere, it will be feared that the country will find itself in another concentration."

Pointing out that during the occupation "the principles of justice and charity were frequently transgressed by those who did not have

elsewhere to hide, Belgians or to do worse compatriots to the enemy," Cardinal Van Rossum asserted they were "freely to be allowed, now, the justice of the country must investigate their cases and punish them appropriately."

"Not sin guilty," he added, "are those who after the liberation returned without authority, disconnected without good reason, and at times ill treated a large number of their fellow citizens, passing whom some are innocent. Many are charged with persecutions and have been kept in prison

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